

Item: Finance Report for the month ending 30 November 2023

To: Executive Leadership Team (ELT)

For: ELT meeting 19 December 2023

Prepared by: Emma Gillard, Manager Finance & Administration

Recommendations

It is recommended that ELT:

- Note that the opening Reserves as at 1 July 2023 is \$16.404m. With the Board approved minimum reserves of \$2.221m, the maximum deficit that the Commission can afford for financial year 2023/24 is \$14.183m.
- 2. **Note** that the projected total operating expenditure for 2023/24 is \$139.436m with an expected deficit of \$15.698m which is 39% higher than budgeted deficit of \$11.308m.
- 9(2)(b)(ii)
- 4. **Discuss** forecasted costs that could be reduced, deferred, or stopped during the period covering from January to June 2024.

Financial Overview

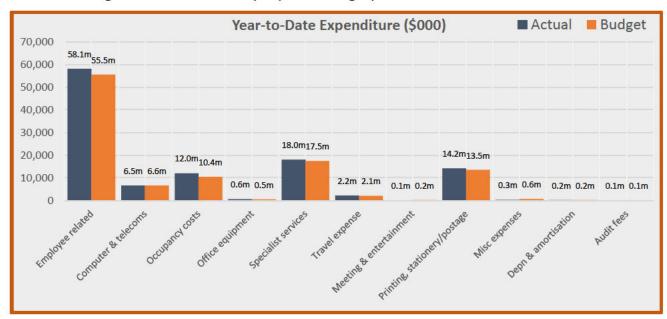
Financial Summary	Current Month				Year-to-Date		Full Year			
\$000	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Budget	Variance	Forecast	Budget	Variance	
Revenue	1,146	217	929	105,847	105,590	257	123,739	122,885	854	
Expenditure	12,915	9,428	(3,488)	112,264	107,166	(5,098)	139,436	134,193	(5,244)	
Surplus / (Deficit)	(11,769)	(9,211)	(2,559)	(6,417)	(1,576)	(4,841)	(15,698)	(11,308)	(4,390)	

- 5. Total expenditure for the month of November is \$12.915m, 37% higher than budget resulting mainly from the delay of offboarding HQ staff due to quality review undertaken on the official election results as well as the electorate vote recounts.
- 6. Year-to-date deficit is 307% higher than budget due to overspends in expenditure (~5% higher than budget). This is largely due to higher-than-expected Field Staff costs, particularly the HQ, or support staff. YTD hours worked for field personnel is 131,640 hours (14%) more worked than budgeted. Additional resources were required due to new processes introduced after the setting of the budgets, and delays to beginning vote counts are also contributors to the overspend, but these additional costs have not been factored into the budget. Also contributing to the overspend is the unbudgeted costs to cover for the required security protocols and resilience in Voting services.

7. Forecast indicates that the Commission will end up with a deficit of \$15.698m which is approximately 39% higher than budget. This is largely driven by an expected overspend in the General Election (6% higher than budget of \$93.139m).

Year-to-Date Operating Expenditure

8. YTD operating expenditure is 5% higher than budget of \$107.166m. Comparison of actual versus budget is outlined below by expense category.



Favourable variance

- Computer and telecommunications are slightly below budget by \$0.086m resulting from underspend in software support and maintenance due to lower uptake of Microsoft licences during the first quarter of the year.
- 10. Meeting and entertainment are also below budget by \$0.125m, mainly due to underspend in meeting hire or lease. The underspend has been expected as more usage of internal premises or voting places for staff meetings and functions.
- 11. Miscellaneous expenses are also below budget by \$0.364m, mainly due to underspend in Election Access Fund grants. These grants are normally offset by revenue, so it's cost neutral to the Commission.

Unfavourable variance

- 12. Employee related expenses are higher than budget by \$2.607m, largely due to higher-than-expected Field Staff costs resulting from the delay of offboarding HQ staff due to quality review undertaken on the official election results as well as the electorate vote recounts. Also contributing to the overspend is \$0.465m relating to the Port Waikato by-election, fully offset by revenue.
- 13. Occupancy costs including office equipment are higher than budget by \$1.668m due to unbudgeted costs to cover for the required security protocols and resilience in Voting services.

- 14. Specialist services are higher than budget by \$0.519m. Contributing to the overspend is \$0.318m relating to the Port Waikato by-election, fully offset by revenue.
- 15. **Printing, stationery, and postage** are higher than budget by \$0.743m, 9(2)(b)(ii)
- 16. Travel expenses are also higher than budget by \$0.136m due to higher usage of car rental and mileage than anticipated in the GE event.

Operating Expenditure by Business Group

Business Group)	Year-to-Date		Full Year				
\$000	Actual	Budget	Variance	Forecast	Budget	Variance		
Office of the Chief Executive	1,344	1,411	67	3,147	3,150	4		
Enterprise Services	14,758	14,258	(501)	24,401	23,780	(622)		
Operations	90,126	84,225	(5,901)	101,708	95,658	(6,050)		
Strategy, Governance & Development	1,244	2,556	1,313	3,708	4,965	1,257		
Programme Management Office	572	625	53	1,341	1,394	53		
Māori Advisory	163	139	(24)	390	332	(57)		
Legal & Policy	4,057	3,952	(106)	4,741	4,913	172		
Projects	(4)	(4.0	2	2	-	-		
Total Expenditure	112,264	107,166	(5,098)	139,436	134,193	(5,244)		

- 17. YTD overspend is \$5.098m which is largely contributed by Operations (\$5.901m) due to hours worked by field staff with a total year-to-date of 131,640 hours (14%) more worked than budgeted, Enterprise Services (\$0.501m) mainly due to overspend in personnel related expenses resulting from contractors filling in vacancies, and Legal & Policy (\$0.106m) due to timing of advertising and publicity in Broadcasting Allocation. However, this is partly offset by underspend in Strategy, Governance & Development (\$1.313m) mainly due to timing of expenses for International (INT) Assistance, and grants relating to Election Access Fund (EAF).
- 18. Excluding EAF, INT & Broadcasting Allocation, the YTD overspend is \$6.128m. The breakdown by expense category is shown below.

Operating Expenditure		Year-to-Date	•	Full Year				
Excluding EAF & INT \$000	Actual	Budget	Variance	Forecast	Budget	Variance		
Employee related expenses	57,815	54,866	(2,949)	73,286	69,656	(3,630)		
Computer & telecommunications	6,537	6,619	82	7,980	8,023	43		
Occupancy costs	12,005	10,401	(1,603)	14,638	13,105	(1,534)		
Office equipment	552	425	(127)	381	506	126		
Specialist services	14,252	13,804	(448)	19,179	18,902	(277)		
Travel expense	2,018	1,759	(259)	2,310	2,061	(249)		
Meeting & entertainment	102	209	107	167	382	215		
Printing, stationery & postage	14,206	13,293	(913)	14,791	13,754	(1,036)		
Miscellaneous expenses	270	253	(17)	366	345	(21)		

Depreciation & amortisation	199	199	12	477	477	-
Audit fees	67	67	-	160	160	는 -
Total Expenditure	108,021	101,894	(6,128)	133,735	127,372	(6,364)

Operating Expenditure by Event

- 19. The YTD overspend of \$5.098 (or \$6.128m excluding EAF, INT and Broadcasting Allocation) is largely driven by the GE event. These overspends are mainly due to more hours worked by field staff within Voting Services than anticipated (14% higher than budget). Also contributing to the overspend is \$1.015m year-to-date cost associated with the Port Waikato by-election, however this is fully offset by revenue received.
- 20. GE event includes EAF and Broadcasting Allocation expenses, whilst BAU includes INT expenses, however, these expenses are fully offset by revenue.

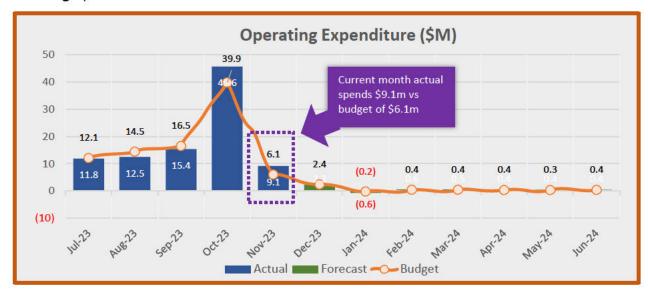
Event	3	Year-to-Date	:	Full Year				
\$000	Actual	Budget	Variance	Forecast	Budget	Variance		
EV1001 – GE2023	94,526	88,956	(5,569)	98,459	93,139	(5,320)		
EV2000 – By-Election	(1)	-	1	(1)	-	1		
EV2001 – By-Election Port Waikato	1,015	-0	(1,015)	1,590		(1,590)		
EV3000 – Representation Commission	170	-	-	71	200	129		
EV4001 – MEO2023	624	749	126	661	787	126		
EV9999 – BAU	16,100	17,460	1,360	38,655	40,067	1,411		
Total Expenditure	112,264	107,166	(5,098)	139,436	134,193	(5,244)		

21. Excluding EAF, INT and Broadcasting Allocation, the YTD overspend is \$6.128m as broken down below by event.

Event – Excluding EAF, INT &	3	Year-to-Date	1	Full Year				
Broadcasting Allocation \$000	Actual	Budget	Variance	Forecast	Budget	Variance		
EV1001 – GE2023	90,898	85,087	(5,811)	94,684	89,018	(5,666)		
EV2000 – By-Election	(1)	-	1	(1)	=	1		
EV2001 – By-Election Port Waikato	1,015		(1,015)	1,590	~	(1,590)		
EV3000 – Representation Commission	52	7.	5	71	200	129		
EV4001 – MEO2023	624	749	126	661	787	126		
EV9999 – BAU	15,485	16,057	572	36,730	37,367	637		
Total Expenditure	108,021	101,894	(6,128)	133,735	127,372	(6,364)		

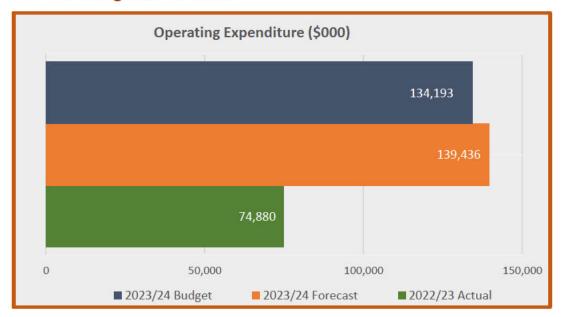
General Election 2023

22. YTD operating expenditure is \$5.569m higher than budget, and forecast at year-end is expected at \$98.459m which is 6% higher than budget. The overspends are mainly due to more hours worked by field staff within Voting Services than anticipated (14% higher than budget).



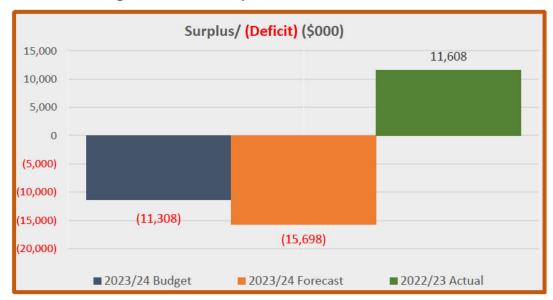


Full Year Budget vs Forecast



23. Full year operating expenditure forecast is ~4% higher than budget of \$134.193m.

Approximately 53% of costs relates to employee related expenses, 17% relates to specialist services, 11% relates to printing, stationery & postage, 11% relates to occupancy costs, and the remaining 8% is for other expenses.



24. End-of-year forecast is expected at \$15.698m deficit as compared to budgeted deficit of \$11.308m. This is mainly due to hours worked by field staff with a total year-to-date of 131,640 hours (14%) more worked than budgeted resulting from the delay of offboarding HQ staff due to quality review undertaken on the official election results as well as the electorate vote recounts. In addition, there is unbudgeted cost for the required security protocols and resilience in Voting Services.

9(2)(5)(ii)

FY2024 Budget Risks

25. The closing Reserves as at 30 June 2023 is \$16.404m. With the Board approved minimum reserves of \$2.221m, the maximum deficit that the Commission can afford for financial year 2023/24 is \$14.183m. However based on the latest forecast, the expected deficit is now at \$15.698m, leaving a shortfall of \$1.515m.

26.	
	9(2)(b)(ii)

- 27. As the year progresses, no permanent savings from employee related expenses have been identified so there is a risk of depleting our reserves that have been set aside as per the Boards instructions. It is important to recognise that any contingencies that have been set aside during the budget process have been fully utilised to fund for unbudgeted but approved expenditure. Further overspends will put the Commission under significant financial pressure, and a rigorous forecast review process will need to be undertaken after Christmas to identify for any possible savings.
- 28. Table below shows the movement of operating reserves.

Movements in Reserves	
Reserves as at 30 June 2019	\$6,070
Surplus 2019/20	\$19,345
Deficit 2020/21	(\$11,096)
Deficit 2021/22	(\$9,515)
Surplus 2022/23	\$11,600
Opening Reserves 1 July 2023	\$16,404
Less Board approved minimum reserves	(\$2,221)
FY2024 Maximum affordable deficit	\$14,183
Less Expected FY2024 deficit	(\$15,698)
FY2024 Projected deficit shortfall	(\$1,515)

Discussion

29. The closing Reserves as at 30 June 2023 is \$16.404m. With the Board approved minimum reserves of \$2.221m, the maximum deficit that the Commission can afford for financial year 2023/24 is \$14.183m.

30. 9(2)(b)(ii) ELT needs

to discuss what areas of spend that are forecasted that could be reduced, deferred, or stopped during the period covering from January to June 2024. These areas could include recruitment for current or new vacancies, travel, and advertising. A thorough forecast review process will be undertaken after Christmas to identify for possible savings and mitigate any potential risks.

Appendices

Statement of Revenue and Expense

Electoral Commission	Y	/ear-to-Date					Forecast					Full Year	
Statement of revenue and expense	Actual	Budget	Variance	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Forecast	Budget	Variance
For the period ending 30 November 2023	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
Revenue													
Revenue from Crown	104,711	104,049 🚄	662	596	5,003	25	25	10,722	3	2	121,085	119,840 📤	1,245
Other Income	1,136	1,541	(405)	191	336	208	210	168	206	198	2,654	3,045	(391)
Total Revenue	105,847	105,590 🚄	257	787	5,339	233	235	10,889	209	200	123,739	122,885 📤	854
Expense													
Employee Related Expenses	58,109	55,502	(2,607)	2,833	2,188	2,182	2,396	2,225	2,301	2,150	74,384	71,074	(3,310)
Computer & Telecommunications	6,542	6,628 🚄	86	523	(639)	261	506	243	244	315	7,996	8,043 📤	47
Occupancy Costs	12,005	10,426	(1,578)	1,497	271	225	166	166	166	166	14,663	13,155	(1,509)
Office Equipment	552	462	(89)	13	(244)	13	11	11	11	13	381	544 📤	163
Specialist Services	18,051	17,532	(519)	931	621	812	753	688	679	793	23,329	23,093	(236)
Travel Expense	2,214	2,077	(136)	110	106	61	87	79	64	61	2,782	2,656	(126)
Meeting & Entertainment	104	229 🗸	125	8	19	1 5	5	5	12	10	179	412 📤	233
Printing, Stationery & Postage	14,206	13,463	(743)	100	114	85	82	78	83	77	14,825	13,959	(866)
Miscellaneous Expenses	283	646 🚄	364	28	18	19	16	19	18	19	421	780 🗻	360
Depreciation & Amortisation	199	199 =	0	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	477	477	ı (
Toral Expenses	112,264	107,166	(5,098)	6,083	2,495	3,714	4,063	3,555	3,617	3,645	139,436	134,193 🔻	(5,244)
Surplus / (deficit)	(6,417)	(1,576)	(4,841)	(5,296)	2,843	(3,481)	(3,828)	7,334	(3,409)	(3,445)	(15,698)	(11,308)	(4,390)

Operating Expenditure by Group

Operating expenditure	Cı	urrent Month		1	Year-to-Date		Full Year			
For the period ending 30 November 2023	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Budget	Variance	Forecast	Budget	Variance	
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	
Business Group		}		}						
Office of the Chief Executive	273	283	1 0	1,344	1,411 🚄	67	3,147	3,150 📤	. 4	
Enterprise Services	2,301	1,900	(401)	14,758	14,258	(501)	24,401	23,780	(622)	
Operations	9,749	6,148	(3,600)	90,126	84,225	(5,901)	101,708	95,658	(6,050)	
Strategy, Governance & Development	273	338	6 5	1,244	2,556 🚄	1,313	3,708	4,965 📤	1,257	
Programme Management Office	112	117		572	625 🚄	53	1,341	1,394 📤	. 53	
Māori Advisory	35	27	(8)	163	139 🔻	(24)	390	332 🔻	(57)	
Legal & Policy	173	614	442	4,057	3,952	(106)	4,741	4,913 📤	. 172	
Projects	-	-)	-	-			-	-	/ <u>-</u>	
Total expenditure	12,915	9,428	(3,488)	112,264	107,166	(5,098)	139,436	134,193	(5,244)	

Excluding Election Access Fund, International Services & Broadcasting Allocation

Operating expenditure	C	urrent Month		,	Year-to-Date		Full Year			
Excluding Election Access Fund, Internation	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Budget	Variance	Forecast	Budget	Variance	
For the period ending 30 November 2023	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	
Business Group										
Office of the Chief Executive	273	283	1 0	1,344	1,411 🚄	67	3,147	3,150	_	
Enterprise Services	2,301	1,900	(401)	14,758	14,258	(501)	24,401	23,780	V (622	
Operations	9,749	6,148	(3,600)	90,126	84,225	(5,901)	101,708	95,658	(6,050	
Strategy, Governance & Development	149	143	(5)	538	709 🚄	171	1,612	1,749	1 3	
Programme Management Office	112	117	<u> 5</u>	572	625 🚄	53	1,341	1,394	<u> </u>	
Māori Advisory	35	27	(8)	163	139	(24)	390	332	V (57	
Legal & Policy	103	74	(29)	521	527 🚄	6	1,136	1,308	1 7	
Projects	-	- E	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Total expenditure	12,722	8,693	(4,029)	108,021	101,894	(6,128)	133,735	127,372	(6,364	

Operating Expenditure by Event

EV9999-BAU	С	urrent Month		· ·	Year-to-Date		Full Year			
Operating expenditure	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Budget	Variance	Forecast	Budget	Variance	
For the period ending 30 November 2023	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	
Business Group										
Office of the Chief Executive	226	283 🗸	57	1,296	1,411	115	3,099	3,150	<u></u> 52	
Enterprise Services	1,623	1,498	(125)	8,234	7,814	(420)	18,177	17,954	(223)	
Operations	623	1,164	540	4,915	5,621	706	12,629	13,297	669	
Strategy, Governance & Development	269	327 🗸	58	1,147	2,112	966	3,460	4,449	989	
Programme Management Office	-	-	-	-			-	-		
Māori Advisory	35	27	(8)	163	139	(24)	390	332	V (57)	
Legal & Policy	68	74 🚄	6	346	363 🗸	17	901	884	(17)	
Projects	-	-	_	-	-		-	-	-	
Total expenditure	2,844	3,373 🗸	529	16,100	17,460 🗸	1,360	38,655	40,067	1,411	

EV1001-GE2023	С	urrent Month			Year-to-Date		Full Year			
Operating expenditure	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Budget	Variance	Forecast	Budget \	/ariance	
For the period ending 30 November 2023	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	
Business Group										
Office of the Chief Executive	(1)	-	1	(0)		0	(0)		0	
Enterprise Services	533	401	(132)	6,376	6,444	68	5,583	5,826	243	
Operations	8,400	4,985	(3,416)	83,801	77,854	(5,947)	87,551	81,574	(5,977)	
Strategy, Governance & Development	(2)	11 🗸	13	91	444	▲ 353	171	516 📤	345	
Programme Management Office	101	117 🗸	16	561	625	▲ 65	1,329	1,394 📤	64	
Māori Advisory	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	
Legal & Policy	91	541 🗸	450	3,696	3,589	(108)	3,825	3,829 📤	4	
Projects	-		-	-	-	-			······································	
Total expenditure	9,122	6,055	(3,067)	94,526	88,956	(5,569)	98,459	93,139 🔻	(5,320)	

EV2001-By-Election Port Waikato	Current Month			Year-to-Date				Full Year				
Operating expenditure	Actual	Budget	Variance		Actual	Budget	Variance		Forecast	Budget	Variance	
For the period ending 30 November 2023	\$000	\$000		\$000	\$000	\$000		\$000	\$000	\$000		\$000
Business Group					-							
Office of the Chief Executive	48	-	~	(48)	48		$\overline{}$	(48)	48	-	•	(48)
Enterprise Services	145			(145)	149		~	(149)	642	-	_	(642)
Operations	704		_	(704)	786		_	(786)	867	-	•	(867)
Strategy, Governance & Development	6	ų.	_	(6)	6		_	(6)	6	-	•	(6)
Programme Management Office	12	(-	~	(12)	12		~	(12)	12	-	_	(12)
Māori Advisory	-			-	-{		-	-	-	-	_	-
Legal & Policy	14		~	(14)	15		\blacksquare	(15)	15	-	•	(15)
Projects	-		_	-	-		-	-	-	-	_	
Total expenditure	929		_	(929)	1.015		_	(1.015)	1.590		_	(1.590)

General Election 2023

Operations Group

EV1001-GE2023	Cı	irrent Month		```	/ear-to-Date		Full Year			
Operating Expenditure	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Budget	Variance	Forecast	Budget V	Variance	
For the period ending 30 November 2023	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	
Operations Group										
Management	107	109 🚄	2	596	557	(40)	1,420	1,338	(82)	
Communications	657	144	(513)	7,969	7,626	(343)	7,993	7,696	(297)	
Enrolment	709	403	(307)	8,761	8,583	(178)	8,761	8,583	(178)	
Engagement & Partnerships	145	58	(87)	1,687	1,618	(69)	1,921	1,852 🔻	(69)	
Business Enablement	50	132 🗸	82	1,088	970	(118)	1,224	1,449 📤	224	
Voting Services	6,732	4,139	(2,593)	63,701	58,501	(5,200)	66,232	60,657	(5,575)	
Total Expenditure	8,400	4,985	(3,416)	83,801	77,854	(5,947)	87,551	81,574	(5,977)	

Projected total operating cost for GE 2023

General Election 2023 \$000	FY22	FY23	FY24	Total
Operating Expenditure	\$7,858	\$28,366	\$98,459	\$134,683



